

# REQUIREMENTS FOR MOBILE FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS

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Mobile Food Service Establishments Requirements  
Metro Water Services

## 1. TEMPORARY FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS

### • GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

#### 1. GENERAL

Mobile food units shall comply with the requirements of the Tennessee Department of Health's Food Service Establishment Rules and Regulations, except as otherwise provided in this policy.

#### 2. PRE-OPERATION REQUIREMENTS

The floor plan, equipment layout, and equipment specifications of the mobile food unit must be submitted to the Metro Public Health Department prior to construction and/or pre-inspection.

#### 3. FLOOR, WALLS, CEILING, AND LIGHTING

The unit must be fully vermin proof by the means of floor, walls, and ceiling. Floor, walls and ceiling must be light-colored, smooth, nonabsorbent and easily cleanable with no exposed utility lines, piping conduits or wiring. Flooring must be constructed of smooth, durable, easily cleanable material. Shielding to protect against broken glass falling onto food shall be provided for all lighting fixtures.

#### 4. COUNTER/SHELVING SURFACES

All surfaces must be easily cleanable, smooth and free of breaks, open seams, cracks, chips, pits and similar imperfections.

#### 5. HAND SINK

A hand sink equipped with a mixing valve faucet must be installed at the same height as the food preparation surface. It must be accessible to the operator(s). The sink can be either a drop-in or a wall-attached style. Provide splashguards separating the sink if within the area of splash (approximately 18 inches) of food preparation, utensil washing, and food equipment areas.

#### 6. WAREWASHING SINK

A three-compartment commercial sink with drain boards at each end is required for the proper washing of food contact utensils. This sink must be seamless with rounded corners and be sized deep and wide enough to accommodate the largest utensil or small ware to be washed.

#### 7. WATER SUPPLY

Potable water must be supplied to each sink by means of a pressurized water system. It is recommended that a minimum sized 30-gallon potable water tank be installed. The tank's size requirement will be determined during the plan review process based on the menu, sink dimension, and operating hours. This tank is to be made of a food grade material. The tank must be installed at an angle that will permit complete drainage of the tank at the end of each day of operation. Due to the need to drain the tank, a ¾ inch outlet must be installed at the lowest section of the tank. Also this tank must be flushed and sanitized monthly. Log records must be retained in the unit for verification. The tank and water fill pipe must be a closed system, thus free from contamination. A ¾ inch water inlet/valve must be installed that is used for filling the potable water tank. This inlet/valve must be installed on the exterior of the unit at a height of not less than five feet off the ground. The water inlet/valve and outlet must be capped when not in use to protect the water supply from contamination.

#### 8. WATER HEATER

A water heater must be installed that is sized large enough to supply at least 110° F water to the hand sink and three-compartment sink during all periods of operation.

#### 9. ELECTRICAL GENERATOR

Every mobile food unit must have sole access to a generator for its basic electrical needs or for times of emergency.

#### **10. WASTE WATER TANK**

A wastewater tank must be installed and have a 15% larger capacity than the combined capacity of the potable water tank and the water heater. An atmospheric vent must be provided from the top of the wastewater tank. A ¾ inch wastewater outlet/valve must be installed on the exterior of the mobile unit that is equipped with a shut-off valve. The tank must be installed in a manner that facilitates proper drainage of the wastewater. **(Size of potable water tank in gallons + capacity of water heater in gallons) x 1.15 = Minimum size requirement for waste water tank)**

#### **11. POTABLE WATER SUPPLY HOSE**

Must provide an adequately sized food grade water hose, which will be used to fill the potable water tank. The hose must be connected to a supply outlet that is equipped with a back flow prevention device. This hose should be either white or clear in color to differentiate from the wastewater drainage hose. When not connected to the water supply and mobile unit, the hose must be completely drained in a manner that protects the cleanliness of the hose and capped at both ends. The hose must be stored in a sanitary manner within the approved, permitted commissary.

#### **12. WASTEWATER DISPOSAL**

The method of disposal of liquid waste from the holding tank of the mobile food unit must be approved by the Metro Public Health Department and Metro Water Services. Metro Water Services requires proof of discharge agreement to be submitted to the Permits Office prior to operation. The wastewater tank must be emptied into an approved sanitary sewer at the end of each day of operation. An approved location, whether the commissary or commercial business must be approved for accepting liquid waste/gray water by both Metro departments. If the operator of the mobile food unit does not own the approved dumpsite, then a receipt of disposal from the owner/operator of the site must be retained in the mobile food unit for at least 30 days.

Note: No material (solid or liquid waste) shall be discharged to the Metro municipal storm sewer system (or to a locale where such material may be washed via storm water runoff into the storm sewer system) as it relates to the operation of a mobile food unit per Metro 15.64.205.

#### **13. WASTEWATER DRAINAGE HOSE**

Must provide an adequately sized hose to be used for emptying the wastewater tank at the end of each day of operation. The hose must be distinctly different in color than the potable water supply hose. The hose must be stored in an area that will not contaminate food, or food contact surfaces. Do not store with the potable water supply hose.

#### **14. GREASE TRAP**

For mobile food units that are moved daily to a staging area, a 10-gallon per minute/20-pound capacity grease trap must be properly plumbed between the three-compartment sink and the wastewater tank. This trap must be cleaned out on a daily basis. The grease and solids are to be disposed as solid waste or recycled when applicable.

#### **15. EXHAUST SYSTEM**

Mechanical exhaust hood shall be provided over all cooking equipment, as required, to effectively remove cooking odors, smoke, steam, and grease-laden vapors. The hood must extend at least six inches beyond the front and sides of the cooking equipment, unless hood is installed against the side wall.

#### **16. OUTER OPENINGS**

All openings to the outside, including serving windows and entrance doors must be screened, self-closing, or equipped with approved and effective air curtains. Screening material shall not be less than 16 mesh to each inch.

#### **17. SOLID WASTE**

Solid waste/trash shall be contained in durable, easily cleanable, insect-proof containers that do not leak nor absorb liquids.

## 18. LEFTOVER FOODS

At the end of each day of operation, all potentially hazardous food that is held hot must rapidly cooled to below 45°F within 4 hours. The cooling device must be located within a permitted food establishment. If this is not possible, then the food must be discarded.

## 19. FOOD SUPPLIES

All food items must be purchased from an approved, permitted food service establishment.

## 20. OPERATION LIMITATIONS

The operation of the mobile food unit is only limited to the interior of the unit. Therefore, the owner/operator can not attach, set up or use any other device or equipment intended to increase the selling, serving or display capacity of the establishment including, but not limited to, counter extensions, tables, ice chests, freezers or refrigerators. The only exception would be covered smokers/grills that is used for batch cooking and operated under the provisions of outdoor cooking in the Tennessee Department of Health's Food Service Establishment Rules and Regulations. The operator of a mobile food unit shall not provide any seating for the customers, waitresses or carhops.

## 21. FIRE PREVENTION

Each mobile food unit must have at least two-(2) 2A40BC rated portable fire extinguishers shall be provided in every mobile food service unit. All propane tank use and storage shall comply with NFPA 1 and 58.

## 22. COMMISSARY

All foods and single service articles must be stored at an approved, permitted commissary. The owner of the commissary must submit floor plans to the Metro Code Administration and the Metro Public Health Department. The owner/operator of the commissary must submit a notarized "**Mobile Unit/Commissary Agreement**" letter to the Food Protection Services Division (a copy of this letter is available at the Public Health Department).

## 23. FOODS PURCHASED ON A DAILY BASIS

For the food items that are purchased each day of operation, the mobile food unit's operator must retain receipts that identify the type of food purchased, amount, and the date. Each receipt must be retained in the mobile food unit for a minimum of seven days for verification purposes.

## 24. OPERATING FROM A SINGLE SITE

The operator/person-in-charge of the mobile food unit shall be required to physically move the unit from the sales site property to their designated commissary at the end of each day of operation. Any variance to this requirement must be submitted in writing to the Director of Food Protection. The unit shall not return to the property until the next day of operation. It is the responsibility of the **site's property owner** to bring the site in compliance with the following sections of the "Additional Requirements" (see page 5).

- Site Plan Layout/Permit Required
- Clearance to Structures
- Restroom Accessibility.

## • **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS: MOBILE FOOD UNITS THAT OPERATES FROM A SINGLE SALES SITE AND NOT MOVED AFTER EACH DAY OF OPERATION:**

### 1. **SITE PLAN LAYOUT/PERMIT REQUIRED**

A Use Permit for the site location must be obtained by the site's **property owner** from the Department of Codes Administration. A site plan must be submitted by the owner of the property to the Metro Codes Administration, Metro Public Health Department, Metro Water and Services and the Metro Fire Marshal's office prior to operating the mobile food unit. The plan must show

available parking, signs, and the relationship of the mobile food unit to any structures and the property lines. The location to be used for food unit placement must be marked off on the property and must comply with zoning and the Fire Marshal set-back requirements.

## **2. 90-DAY TEMPORARY PERMIT FROM FIRE MARSHAL**

Permits will be required from the Fire Marshal's office for mobile food units that operate from a single sales site. This permit allows the unit to sell from a designated site for up to 90 days. Further, the unit must be removed from the site for at least 7 days before re-applying for another 90-Day Temporary Permit. Units that are stationary for more than 90 days are considered permanent and shall meet the requirements of NFPA 1 and the Life Safety Code.

## **3. CLEARANCE TO STRUCTURES**

The Fire Marshal's office requires a minimum of 20 feet clearance from any part of a mobile concession food unit to any structure built of combustible construction. There shall be a minimum of 10 feet clearance between any part of the mobile food unit and any structure built of non-combustible construction. This shall include any overhang, awning or projection from the building.

## **4. WATER SUPPLY**

The mobile food unit must be connected to the public water supply. A plumbing permit must be obtained from the Department of Codes Administration and the connections must comply with the requirements of the Metro Water Services. The connection to the unit must be a quick connect system. Hoses and faucets equipped with these quick connections shall be deemed to meet the requirements of the Metro Codes Administration and the Metro Water and Sewerage Services. A water meter and backflow preventer must be in place prior to the mobile food unit's water service connection.

## **5. ELECTRICAL SUPPLY**

The electrical supply is limited to a quick connect electrical service. An electrical permit must be obtained from the Department of Codes Administration. The electrical line from the mobile food unit must be run overhead (at least five feet) to the electrical outlet. The use of a generator for electrical service is not approved.

The following is the list of requirements from the Codes Administration:

- A. Disconnecting means: each unit shall be provided with a fused or circuit breaker disconnect switch located within sight and within 6 feet of each portable unit to be plugged into.
- B. The disconnect shall not be less than 30 ampere rating at 125/230 volts and must be listed and approved for outside locations.
- C. Feeder conductors supplying power to this 30 ampere disconnect means shall originate from an approved distribution or branch circuit panel board located on the same property that the mobile unit is to be parked.
- D. The supply line or feeder assembly from the portable unit to the receptacle mounted at the disconnect shall not have more than one listed 30 ampere power supply cord with an integrally molded or securely attached cord cap.
- E. Cords with adapters and pigtail ends and standard extension cords shall not be permitted.
- F. All cords shall be listed type with three wire 120 volt or four wire 120/240 volt conductors one of which shall be identified by a continuous green color or a continuous green color with one or more yellow stripes for use as the grounded conductor.
- G. The attach plug on the cord from the unit shall plug into an approved 30 ampere 125/230 volt 3 wire grounding type receptacle mounted at the disconnecting means provided on location.

- H. Where the flexible cords are used as means of supplying power from the units to the disconnect shall be listed for extra hard usage and cannot be subjected to physical damage.
- I. All 125/230 volt 15, 20 & 30 ampere receptacle outlets mounted at the disconnect shall have a listed ground fault circuit-interrupter protection for personnel.
- J. All these disconnects that are provided for mobile food units shall be installed by a licensed electrician and shall have proper permits and inspections made on both the disconnect and the power supply at each unit location.

#### **6. WASTEWATER CONNECTION**

On-site sewer connections complying with the requirements of Metro Water Services must be provided at the property site. All wastewater connections must connect to the public sewerage system and have a backflow protection device, such as a “swing check valve”. The pipe connection must be of a quick connect type that meets the requirements of the Metro Codes Administration and the Metro Water Services. A dedicated 20-gallon per minute/40 pound grease trap must be located within the service connection prior to introduction of sanitary waste. The maintenance of the grease trap, in a manner consistent with applicable codes, will be the responsibility of the property owner.

#### **7. GREASE TRAP**

A dedicated 20-gallon per minute/40-pound capacity grease trap must be properly plumbed between the three-compartment sink and the wastewater tank. This trap must be cleaned out on a weekly basis.

#### **8. RESTROOM ACCESSIBILITY**

The owner of the unit must obtain a signed agreement with the owner of a building on the parcel, or an adjoining parcel, stating that employees can have access to their restroom facilities during all periods of operations. The building in which the restroom for employees is provided must not be more than 500 feet, door to door, from the unit.

- **EXEMPTIONS – TO THE RULES AND REGULATIONS OF MOBILE FOOD UNITS:**

- 1. **TEMPORARY FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS**

Any food service operation that operates from a Metro Government approved special event, such as Dancin’-in-the-District, Tennessee State Fair, Centennial Park’s Craft Fair, etc. will not have to meet the requirements of this document. These types of establishments will have to meet the rules and regulations of the Tennessee Department of Health’s Food Service Establishment for Mobile Food Units, Chapter 1200-23-1-.02, (12) or Temporary Food Service, Chapter 1200-23-1-.02, (13).